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CHRISTIAN LIFE MANIFESTED

Wherein is shewed who they are which follows the Lamb in meekneſs and Patience

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THe night of Apoſtacy having overſpread the earth, and the darkneſs of it having covered the people, the wiſdome below hath ſought out many Inventions, and the name of Chriſtians have been taken up from ſomething obſerved which the wiſdome below hath invented; and with this name people are ſatisfied, though from the life they be alienated, and ſuch are Gentiles who know not God, but are ſeperated from him, through the darkneſs that is in them; and whilſt they profeſs to know God, and to worſhip him, they are ignorant of him, and in works denies him & though they have taken upon themſelves the name of Chriſtians, yet they are not changed from the Gentiles nature but abides in darkneſs and walkes in darkneſs, and knows not whither they go, becauſe that darkneſs hath blinded their minds, and ſuch errs from the way of truth, notwithſtanding they profeſs a Chriſtian ſtate, and a Chriſtian worſhip, and the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt is hid from their eyes, and they do not know the fellowſhip of the Goſpel, but walks in their own way, and follows the devices of their own hearts, and worſhips the works of their own hands after the manner of the Gentiles, and though that which may be known of God be manifeſt in them, yet they like not to retain God in their knowledge, but likes to retain their own inventions better, and ſo they forſake the Fountain of living water, and hews to themſelves broken Ciſterns that can hold no water, and this brings a famine upon the land becauſe people feels not the Lord, nor the ſprings of his refreſhings, and though they may aſſemble together and ſit before him as his people, yet their hearts are not towards him, and therefore in vain they worſhip him: Now foraſmuch as that which may be known of God is manifeſt in people, and that both Jew and Gentile are

enlightened with the light of Christ, and that there is no respect of persons with God, then that which is manifest from God within people is to be chiefly minded in its manifestation, for seeing that none can know God but by the Revellation of Jesus Christ, and that none can witness salvation but by the power of Christ, then is every one to mind that light with which Christ enlightens them, that by the manifestation of it they may know God, and worship him as he is God, for as the light comes from God, so doth it give the knowledge of God in the hearts of all that beleive in it, and there is not any that are true Christians until they beleive in the light which is manifest from God within them, for as the Apostasie is entred, and the darkness overspread, so with the light that shines in the heart is darkness expelled, and then the light doth give the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus, and in the light thus shining the Lord is known and truely worshiped, for as blindness hath happned in part unto the Jews, until the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in, the Lord willing to make known his loveing kindness unto a people that sought him not, and that they might be his people which were not his people, and that both Jews and Gentiles in fulness of time might be gathered together in one, even in Christ, so doth his power work both in Jews and Gentiles who in his light beleive; by which power they come to be changed from all things which they have outwardly observed, and comes to be renewed in the spirits of their minds, and to feel the inward man restored into Christ, who of twain maketh one new man in himself and so maketh peace, for he is not a Jew which is one outward, neither is circumcision that of the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inward, and circumcision is that of the heart, which is wrought by the power of Gods spirit within man, and there is the seed of *Abraham* known both in Jew and Gentile, for the love of God doth universally spread abroad unto all Nations, Kindreds and People, and in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteousness is accepted of him, and Christianity doth not lye in any outward observation, nor in any particular form which in any Nation, or amongst any people is set up, but it is in Christ the seed, and if any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and a a new creature is a Christian, for Christ is his life, and this is that which hath been witnessed by all the holy men of God in ages past, who were per-

takers of the Divine nature, and had all things therein given them that pertained to life and godlineſs, and there is none can come to a chriſtian ſtate, but who comes to the light which from the life is made manifeſt, for the light is given of God to ſearch out all invented wayes and formed works, and with the light they are all reproved, and that which makes them manifeſt and reproves them, that is the way which leads out of them, and as the teſtimony of it is received, ſo all invented waies and formed works comes to be denied, and the mind comes actually to be diſpoſed in the leadings of the light in its own way, and then the judgement riſes in the power, which caſts out the Idol, and deſtroyes the inventor, and they both fall together by the work of the power, and then the nature of the Heathen dies, and Chriſt appears in the glory of his own life, and tranſlates the beleiver into the immage of his own likeneſs, and that is a chriſtian ſtate in which man comes into union with Chriſt, and lives the life of Chriſt, and there the Jew and the Gentile is made one, and comes into the fellowſhip of the Goſpel, and Chriſt is then felt who is a chriſtians nature, and from the nature there is fruit produced in love, and peace, and meekneſs, and gentleneſs, and that which doth not bear this fruit it is none of Chriſts, for all ſtrife, and envy, and malice is from the darkneſs, and they that live in ſuch things are not Chriſtians, though they may take the name upon them, but they are in the Heathens nature, where God they know not, and ſuch deſtroyes one another, who are not in the love, and peace and unity of the ſpirit. for where the ſpirit is not received the fruit of it cannot be manifeſted, and therefore every mans way, ſeeming right in his own eyes, he would have all to walk with him in his path, and there riſes all contention from mens own opinions, for which they perſecute and deſtroies one another about their Religion, but the life of a chriſtian is not ſo, for the birth born of God is love, and love thinketh no ill, but is kind and courteous, and gentle towards all men, and they that are born of this life they are true chriſtians, and their life doth manifeſt their nature, and though they be hated and wronged they do not ſeek revenge, and though they be reviled they do not revile again, but endures patiently, and waits to ſee the converſion of their enemies, for chriſtians never perſecuted any but hath alwayes been perſecuted by the Apoſtates, who have cloathed themſelves with the name of Chriſti-

ans; and it hath ever been a mark of a true Diſciple of Chriſt to be hated and perſecuted for his names ſake, and whoſoever will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer perſecution, but whoſoever doth live godly in Chriſt Jeſus doth not perſecute any, for it is contrary to their life, for they that are born of God, they have the mind of Chriſt, and in his life they hold forth their teſtimony in all long-ſuffering, meekneſs and patience, not ſtriving nor reſiſting nor revenging, but loving, and praying, and bleſſing, and in this a chriſtian life is manifeſted, and the heathens life is judged and condemned, for who are guided by the ſpirit of God they do not perſecute any, though they be contrary minded, but in all meekneſs and gentleneſs they labour in love, and ſeeks to win them unto the truth which they are partakers of, and by ſoundneſs of doctrine and holineſs of life, they hold forth their teſtimony, and this manifeſts a chriſtian life, where love and good will is held forth unto all people, and this life is far from perſecuting any, for it can love an enemy, and as there can be no perfect unity nor fellowſhip but in the ſpirit of God, ſo they that are guided by the ſpirit and lives in it, they labour in love to gather others into fellowſhip with them, for what can perſecution do to the changing and renewing the mind of a man, it can never work reformation in the heart, though it may force the outward man to conform in practiſe, for it is only the love which overcometh and perſwadeth the mind into the way of truth, and though perſecution may prevail over ſome as to make them conform in practiſe, yet it doth not make them Chriſtians, neither doth it caſt out hereſie, where any is found in ſuch a ſtate; and what advantage hath the perſecutors by forcing contrary minds into their practiſe and worſhip, whileſt ſuch is not in their own hearts reformed thereunto, and to force a conformity when in heart people is not reformed, it is but to make a hypocrite, for if a man be not perſwaded in his own heart that the practiſe which he obſerveth is according to truth, he can never joyn in unity with ſuch as are ſo perſwaded, though he may conform his body to their obſervation: Then foraſmuch as perſecution cannot make a chriſtian, neither caſt out hereſie where it is, then it would be more commendable to let perſecution ceaſe, ſeeing that it doth not manifeſt a chriſtian life in practiſe, neither can make a chriſtian by ſuch a practiſe, therfore let every one waite to be gathered in the ſpirit of life and love in which there is no

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perſecution, but peace and unity, and proſperity every way, for it ever hath been and is the ruine of people and nations where any Religion hath been endeavoured to be promoted by perſecution, and ſuch as have endeavoured it have ever fallen in it, but could never eſtabliſh themſelves by it, and ſo the fall of one hath been the riſe of another, and theſe things brings deſolation and not peace.

Objection. *But if any ſhall ſay that people and nations ought to be kept in order, in matter of worſhip, according to the preſent conſtitutions of the laws of that nation wherein they live.*

Anſw. It is the ſpirit of God that ordereth all in the worſhip of God, and they that are not ordered by the ſpirit of God they are in diſorder, however they may conforme to that worſhip which by the laws of any nation is ſet up, and if the worſhip be not performed in the ſpirit of God, it is not the worſhip of God, neither is that order in the order of God, for God is worſhiped in the ſpirit only, and not by the conſtraint of the conſtitution of any nation law, and when people are guided by the ſpirit of God, then they are guided in good order, and edifies and comforts one another, and dwells together in the love, and peace, and unity of the ſpirit, and ſo they are under the law of the ſpirit, which only hath power to order the conſcience, and not the law of any nation in things pertaining to the worſhip of God, ſo as the ſpirit comes to be received and the teſtimony of it obeyed, then by the ſpirit the mind of man is diſpoſed in love and peace, and meekneſs, and godlineſs, and that is good order, and againſt ſuch there is no law, for the birth born of God hath love to all people, and it is this day manifeſted amongſt a poor and an afflicted remnant whom the Lord hath raiſed in his power, and choſen to himſelf, who are by ſuch as are ſtrangers to their life reproachfully called *Quakers*, though they have a name given them which no ſtranger can read, for the Lord hath raiſed them in his own name, and the name of Jeſus is their life, and it is a name which is above every name, and a name unto which every knee muſt bow, and they beare his name in all long ſuffering and patience, and follows his leadings in all gentleneſs, and meekneſs, and with his name they are cloathed as with a garment, for they are of him and they live unto him, and the fruit of his own life declares his prayſes, he hath

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appeared for them in the day of their diſtreſs, and he hath helped them when there was none to pitty them, and by the arm of his power he hath raiſed them, and they are his people, and they dare not deny him, but are in love with him and keeps his Commandements, and he prepares their way for them, and leads them in it with joy of heart, and though tribulation do attend them, yet with his power he preſerves them, and they are not weary though there race be long; So doth the Lord our God give unto us his peace in all that he calls us to, and we deſire that all might be partakers with us, which we know none can that ſet themſelves againſt us, and as the Lord hath wrought his own work in us, and hath changed us from that nature in which we ſometimes lived, ſo we are conſtrained to ſerve him and worſhip him in the ſpirit in which he hath gathered us, and as the cauſe is his own, ſo we commit it to him, who is able to defend it, and to preſerve us in it, and we muſt confeſs it before men, and we know that we ſhall never be aſhamed of our teſtimony, for that of God in every conſcience is our witneſs how unblamably we have behaved our ſelves, and how throrgh all our ſufferings and hardſhips we have borne and endured with patience, and have not at any time taken advantage againſt thoſe who without law have wronged us, but have in our innocency been willing to bear the reproach of thoſe that have reproached us, and to endure the hard afflictions of thoſe that have afflicted us, and it is well known that we have not at any time ſorght an occaſion againſt thoſe that have dealt cruelly with us, but have ſought their eternal good; and it is alſo well known that we have not behaved our ſelves diſorderly or tumultuouſly among any people, but in all ſobriety, meekneſs and fear, we have held forth our teſtimony, and have laboured in the work of the Goſpel, that all might be gathered into the fellowſhip of it, and come to the enjoyment of the love and peace that is in it, and in theſe things we have manifeſted a chriſtian life, in its nature, which is a ſtate beyond the Jews and Gentiles, and Apoſtates, who are not yet attained unto the glorious Reſurrection of Chriſt, nor to the myſtery of the fellowſhip of the Goſpel, and as we have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo do we walk in him, and are rooted and grounded in his love, and by his power we are preſerved to abide faithful, and to perſevere in the work unto which he hath called us, and

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by how much we are afflicted for his ſake, by ſo much the more doth he cauſe his joy to ſpring and abound in our hearts, ſo that though we be afflicted, yet we are not caſt down, and though we be perſecuted yet we are not forſaken, for the Lord is with us in all our tryals, and in faithfulneſs he performs his promiſe, even as with his ſeed of old, ſo that when we paſs through the fire he is with us, and when we go through the water it doth not overflow us, for the Lord is our Rock and refuge, and by him alone we are ſaved as it is at this day; Therefore ye people behold a chriſtian life, which in this day is manifeſted as in times of old, for the Lord hath raiſed a people who are of the ſeed of *Abraham*, and he eſtabliſheth his covenant with them for ever, and he hath ſaid in his counſel, ſurely in bleſſing I will bleſs them, and in multiplying I will multiply them, and their branches ſhall ſpread abroad, and they ſhall flouriſh as plants of my own hand, and I will pluck up the wild plants from amongſt them, and will lay waſt the bryars and thorns that troubles them, and they ſhall grow in my love and increaſe in my life, for I am their God and they are my people, and all generations ſhall call them bleſſed: Now foraſmuch as theſe things are ſo, and that the Lord hath called us unto peace, and the fruit of his ſpirit doth ſo manifeſt it ſelf through us; then why is it that we bear the affliction of this preſent time? for as we follow peace with all men, and walks blameleſly towards all men, ſo ought we to receive encouragement in the ſame, and not to be oppreſſed for our obedience unto God, for as the life that we live is the life of Chriſt, ſo it is not in our own power to make choice of any thing in our own wills, but as we have received Chriſt, and lives in his life, ſo by him alone we are diſpoſed, and it is his leadings that we follow, & we know his way is peace, and his life eternal reſt: Therefore all people of all ſorts, waite in the light to know a chriſtian life, and content not your ſelves with a chriſtian name, for except you be regenerated and born again, you cannot enter into the kingdome of God, and howſoever you may be cloathed with the name of chriſtians, yet whileſt the Heathen nature lodgeth in you the uncleanneſs remains upon you, and your chriſtian name will leave you in the day of your calamity, and then you will ſee the want of a chriſtian nature, and ſo if whilſt you ſeem to be ſomething in a chriſtian name you be found nothing in a chriſtian nature, you do but deceive your ſelves in your imaginations; and now the day of the Lord ſhines forth, and the light of it ſpreads abroad, and he is gathering the ſcattered in the covenant of his life and with the light of his day he is viſiting the Nations, and he proclaims his ſalvation in the word of his power, and that is his living teſtimony in every

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man, and the witneſs of it is true and faithful, and unto this muſt every man turn his mind, if ever he come to have life in Chriſt, or come to witneſs a chriſtian ſtate, and therefore every one is to bow unto that which reproves them, for anger, and envy and malice, and deceit, for that is Gods witneſs whoſe word is life, and let your ear be open to its counſel, and caſt not behind you its holy teſtimony, but encline with dilligence, and obey it with carefulneſs, that by it you may be lead out of all your own wayes where you are ſcattered, & may come into unity and fellowſhip with thoſe who are by it gathered, and ſo worſhip God in his living ſpirit in which there is no condemnation, and there you will know a chriſtian life by tranſlation, & then you will ceaſe from perſecution, and live in love and peace and unity with thoſe that obey the goſpel, and where there is unity there is no perſecution: So all Rulers, Teachers and People, be ſober and moderate, and let not innocent chriſtians be the obj ct of your ſeverity, but wait for the day of redemption which is come, and is yet coming, that you may all feel the power of God to change your hears, who hath all hearts in his hand, and that the weight of Gods power may go over all that in you which at any time provokes you to anger and evil will, and draws you to exerciſe cruelty upon the meek of the earth, and that it may all be ſubdued and beaten down into the obedience of Chriſt, that the low meek humble ſpirit may ariſe in you, and by its own power diſpoſe you and order you, for this is the day of the Lords gathering, though it be a day of ſore affl ction, and though many be yet a far off, yet is the Lord fetching them in, for the cords of his love is very ſtrong, and he is gathering together in one, even in Chriſt, in whoſe love and life many are ſet down in reſt, and inherits the riches of his grace in heavenly places, and many are drawing nigh to their habitation, who have been wandring as ſheep without a ſhepheard, but now are returning to the ſhepheard and Biſhop of their ſouls, whoſe paſtures are freſh and green, with which he doth ſatisfie every breathing ſoul that cannot live by any other food, So if you will hear and obey Gods ſpirit in your ſelves, then may you do well, and may come into unity and fellowſhip with us, who of the ſpirit are born, and loves the Lord Jeſus Ch iſt in ſincerity, but if you refuſe the heavenly call of Gods holy ſpirit in your conſcience, and will not come unto us who in the ſpirit of life and bond of peace are united, but yet ſay in your hearts that you will make us come unto you, then do you deceive your ſelves with an uncertain hope, for as we abide in the life in which we are gathered, and in which we have fellowſhip with God and one another, it is moſt certain that if you will not come unto us we can never return unto you, and foraſmuch as God in his mercy hath manifeſted his life in us, ſo is our beleif in it, and our teſtimony is unto it, and the life that we now live is by the faith of the ſon of God, and the dearneſs of his love is more pretious unto us then all perithing things, and in his power we wait to be preſerved, in whoſe life we are united, and from whoſe nature a chriſtian life is manifeſted, and this is the Lamb whom we follow, who leads us in his hand, and comforts us with the riches of his goodneſs, and we live by him, and his own works prayſes him, who is over all bleſſed for ever. W. S.

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